

AF Way speeds up computer purchasing

By SSgt Cortchie Welch
Air Mobility Command Public Affairs

SCOTT AIR FORCE BASE, ILL (AFPN) – Ordering and buying new computer hardware has become a quicker and cheaper process for Air Force people by virtue of a new Web site called Air Force Way.

AFWay is a virtual "computer store" that allows anyone with access to a computer to go online and search, evaluate, select and purchase hardware – all in a single view. The computer store lists several leading information technology vendors or channel partners that offer Defense Department pre-approved and compliant products at competitive prices.

"AFWay provides comprehensive computer shopping that allows users to configure their own PC while online," said MSgt David McClellan, AFWay process manager at Air Combat Command, Langley Air Force Base, Va. "People can select and view the features they desire at prices they can afford."

Once customers submit their requirements, the system then queries the computer suppliers. Then the page displays the vendors' side-by-side comparisons ranked by cost and technology, allowing customers to make a best-value selection.

The system then accepts the customer's selection and routes it to selected approval authorities. Once a selection is approved for purchase, requests are electronically passed to the users' government purchase cardholders to complete the transaction. The new program requires little manual coordination, cutting the amount of time to get approval from weeks to a matter of hours.

"AFWay provides comprehensive item accountability at the point of purchase," MSgt McClellan said. "Every purchase is automatically recorded with complete coordination and approved audit trails. AFWay's design provides a single, streamlined electronic business flow for all facets of the IT lifecycle."

ACC's communications and information directorate operates and maintains AFWay. The site is a spin-off of ACCWay launched in 1999 that command officials built to streamline the process for purchasing hardware while eliminating manpower intensive activities and reducing lifecycle costs.

In ACCWay's first full year of operation, IT sales reached \$19 million. Bulk sales for personal computers alone exceeded 6,000, with discounts reaching 29 percent, or about \$300 per system.

For more information about AFWay, visit the site at afway.acc.af.mil.

(Courtesy of AMC News Service.)

U.S. missile defense efforts will move beyond treaty

By Gerry Gilmore
American Forces Press Service

WASHINGTON – Ballistic missile defense is crucial to U.S. national security, and its development will eventually conflict with the 1972 U.S.-Soviet Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty, Deputy Defense Secretary Paul Wolfowitz said July 12.

"Our program is designed to develop the most capable possible defense for our country, our allies and our deployed forces at the earliest feasible time," Wolfowitz said before the Senate Armed Forces Committee. "That means it will at some point — and increasingly over time — encounter the constraints imposed by the ABM Treaty."

Wolfowitz emphasized that the administration "does not intend to violate the ABM Treaty. We intend to move beyond it" by working with the Russians to develop "a new security framework that reflects the fact that the Cold War is over and that the U.S. and Russia are not enemies."

He added that the United States expects to have reached an understanding with Russia by the time its development program bumps up against the constraints of the ABM Treaty.

The amended DOD fiscal 2002 budget asks for \$8.3 billion for missile defense, up about \$3 billion from the original proposal. Pending congressional approval, Pentagon officials said, the money will be used to conduct more testing at Kwajalein Atoll in the Pacific and Vandenberg Air Force Base, Calif., and to establish more test facilities in Alaska.

Wolfowitz said missile defense is a critical deterrent against 21st century threats posed by chemical, biological and nuclear weapons of mass destruction delivered by ballistic missiles.

"If we do not build defenses against these weapons now, hostile powers will soon have — or may already have — the ability to strike U.S. and allied cities with nuclear, chemical or biological weapons," he said. "They will have the power to hold our people hostage to blackmail and terror."

Is it the shoes?

Lt Col Jerry Kain, 341st Space Wing Inspector General, throws a bowling ball down the lane during the company grade officers versus field grade officers bowling tournament. The FGOs demolished the CGOs, and 1st Lt Darin Durand, 341st Mission Support Squadron, was the high individual scorer for the tournament.

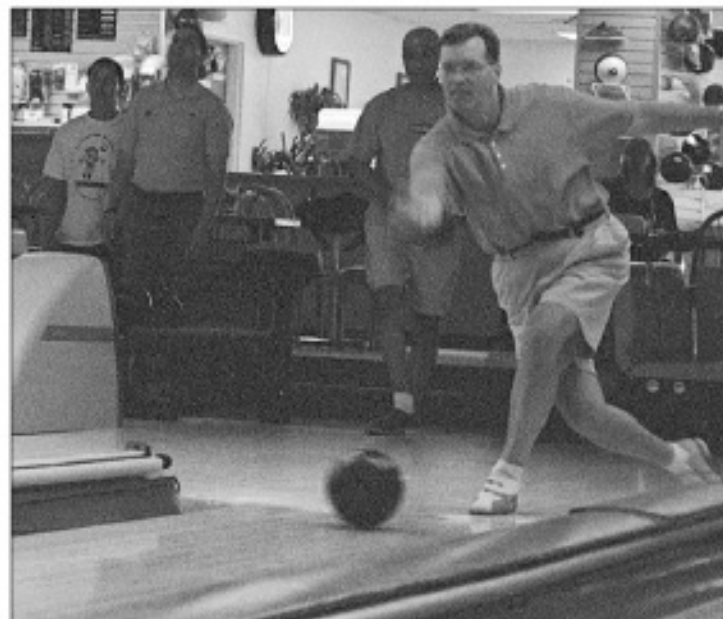


Photo by Harold Barnes III

Survey gives leadership pulse of force, cuts cost

By SSgt Amy Parr
Air Force Print News

WASHINGTON – In the past, Air Force-wide equal opportunity climate surveys cost millions of dollars and oftentimes took years for results to be released. Beginning this fall, all that will change.

A real-time equal opportunity unit climate assessment will be available Oct. 1, said Lt Col Kevin Driscoll, military equal opportunity chief at the Pentagon.

Surveys can be routine or directed, and will be given every time there's a change of command, a problem within a unit, or whenever a commander wants to know what people in the unit think.

Officials developed the program to cut down on cost and time, and to provide commanders at all levels – unit, wing, major command and headquarters – with a timely tool to routinely check the pulse of the force.

The survey offers a standard set of 39 questions with additional questions available to unit commanders to develop locally. It addresses a wide range of topics including job satisfaction, peer relationships, unit leadership, communication, sexual harassment and discrimination. This data can be rolled up by wing, base, major command and overall Air Force climate data results. As data rolls up, any subordinate-level command identification is purged.

Commanders may add up to 10 questions to find out anything they want to know, Lt Col Driscoll said. If they want to know how people feel about retention or suicide prevention all they have to do is add a question regarding those issues, and the military equal opportunity people at the base office will add them to the data base for that unit.

At a minimum, surveys will be given at each

unit every two years. Essentially, Lt Col Driscoll said, half of the force will have an opportunity to participate each year. Unlike past Defense Department equal opportunity or service surveys, where results were released later, this Web-based survey will have immediate results. Because the survey is computer-based and prompts the respondent, there's little room for human database entry errors.

In the past, surveys were labor intensive and time consuming, Lt Col Driscoll said. The new survey will cut base-level administration by 60 percent, while giving unit commanders a timely and consistent product.

"It's real-time information to leadership of how the climate (of the Air Force) is," he said.

To access the survey, people will log onto a secure server with a one-time user password. These passwords are randomly generated and assigned, but are survey specific. People can access the survey from any computer, anywhere in the world, and is 100-percent confidential.

Unlike past surveys, Lt Col Driscoll said this survey also clarifies whom a certain question is about. Prior surveys would ask questions about commanders or first sergeants, which oftentimes confused people. "Sometimes a commander had just arrived and people didn't know if they should answer the question about the old commander or the new commander," he said. "The new survey provides the name of the person referred to in the question."

Results can be broken down by Air Force Specialty Code, rank, race, gender and unit type. It's also broken down further to include military, as well as civilians, local nationals, contractors and nonappropriated-fund employees.

"This is a powerful tool," Lt Col Driscoll said. "For example, if we wanted more information on why a selected career field is having retention problems, we can pull the data by AFSC and provide that information to the personnel managers."

"It's real-time information of how the climate (of the Air Force) is."

Lt Col Kevin Driscoll
Military equal opportunity
chief at the Pentagon